

piston causes axial movement of the valve pin, wherein the valve pin extends from the clamp plate and into the manifold, the method comprising the steps of:

(A) decoupling the valve pin from the piston while the clamp plate remains coupled to the mold, the valve pin actuator remains mounted in the clamp plate and the piston remains sealingly mounted within the valve pin actuator; and

(B) decoupling the clamp plate and the valve pin actuator; including the piston, from the mold while the valve pin remains extended into the manifold.

27. (Amended) A method of adjusting the axial position of a valve pin for use in an injection molding system including a mold, a clamp plate coupled to the mold, a manifold having at least one injection nozzle coupled thereto, the manifold being seated between the mold and the clamp plate, and a valve pin actuator mounted in the clamp plate and including a piston slidably mounted therein having the valve pin coupled thereto so that movement of the piston causes axial movement of the valve pin, wherein the valve pin extends from the clamp plate and into the manifold, the method comprising steps of:

(A) decoupling the valve pin from the piston while the clamp plate remains coupled to the mold and the valve pin actuator remains mounted in the clamp plate; and

(B) adjusting the axial position of the valve pin while the valve pin is decoupled from the piston, while the clamp plate and the valve pin actuator remain coupled to the mold and while the valve pin remains extended into the manifold.

Please add new claims 28-32 as follows:

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the piston is sealingly mounted within the valve pin actuator, and step (A) is performed while the piston remains sealingly mounted within the valve pin actuator.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein step (B) is performed by rotationally adjusting a screw coupled to the valve pin.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein step (B) is performed while the piston remains sealingly mounted within the valve pin actuator.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the step (B) is performed by rotationally adjusting a screw coupled to the valve pin.

32. The method of claim 11, wherein step (B) is performed while the piston remains sealingly mounted within the valve pin actuator.